

The Invocation in different languages¹

Inayat Khan wrote the invocation as we now know it in his notebook after abandoning the Arabic invocation he used to sing before his lectures. He stopped this habit when a newspaper wrote he mesmerized his audience with his music, as mesmerizing or enchanting was the opposite of what he wanted to achieve.

The first version reads :

*Towards the One,
the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty,
the Only Being.
United with all the illuminated souls,
the rays of the Master spirit.
One with all the illuminated souls.
United with all the illuminated souls,
who form the embodiment of the Master,
the Spirit of Guidance .*

The second version is how we now know the invocation:

*Towards the One,
the Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty,
the Only Being, united with all the illuminated souls
who form the embodiment of the Master,
the Spirit of Guidance.²*

Apart from a different phrasing for 'one with' or 'united with' all the illuminated souls, a main difference is the use of dots in the first version versus commas in the second one, making the invocation into one long sentence.

The Invocation is difficult to translate. It has no verb and the subject is unclear. Depending on the language, the translator has to make many decisions, often delicate. Some languages like the Mediterranean ones are gendered (male, female, neutral) and have different endings for singular or plural, some – like German and Russian – have four or more declensions that force the translator to decide what place the word has in the whole context.

Some translations see 'united' as plural, some as singular. From the correspondence we received from France, Spain and South America, it became obvious this is partly because the plural avoids making the decision of gendering 'united' (in the Latin-based languages the plural is the same for male and female), partly because of differences in understanding whether 'united' refers the 'The One' or to us all. Although the second version with commas seems to link 'united' with 'The One', whereas in the first version with dots, one can read 'united' as the start of a new sentence and read it as [we are] united, making it plural, linguistically both singular and plural are possible.

Please see our *The Sufi Path of Love and Understanding* for a deeper understand-

¹ Appendix from *The Sufi Path of Love and Understanding*. PIM Publications.

² See *The Complete Works of Pir-O-Murshid Hazrat Inayat Khan, Original Texts: Sayings, Part II*, p. 149. Nekbakht Foundation.

ing of the invocation, making i.a. clear that the singular version is not saying that the One is *only* connected with 'the illuminated souls' and showing how the word Master, a stumble block for many who live in the US, refers to mastery (*sadhana* or the Path of Accomplishment).

Here, we merely want to present the different versions we have come across during our travels and that were sent to us on our request.

The list below is far from complete, both in terms of different languages as in differences between translations in the same language.

As an example of the latter, we offer here two different translations into German, used by different circles. In these German translations, some of the words and the rhythm are slightly different, but the meaning conveyed is the same. Other versions have greater variation and tend towards a different understanding of the Invocation. Examples of these are the European and South-American Spanish and Portuguese versions.

Note that there are also different varieties in English, as in some countries (notably the US) 'Toward' is pronounced as one syllable, in others (e.g. the U.K.) as two syllables. With or without the ending 's', this offers four possible pronunciations, all of them grammatically correct. We have come across all four in the different English-speaking countries.

English

Toward(s) the One,
The Perfection of Love, Harmony and Beauty
The only Being, united with all the illuminated souls
Who form the embodiment of the Master
The Spirit of Guidance.

German (Inayatiyya)

Dem Einen entgegen,
der Vollkommenheit von Liebe,
Harmonie und Schönheit,
dem einzig Seienden,
vereint mit all den erleuchteten Seelen,
die den Meister verkörpern, den Geist der Führung.

German (Ruhaniat Order)

Dem Einen entgegen,
der Vollkommenheit der Liebe, der Harmonie,
und der Schönheit,
dem einzig Seienden;
Vereint mit all den erleuchteten Seelen,
die den Meister, den Geist der Führung, verkörpern.

German (Swiss)

Em Eine entgäge
Dr Voukommeheit vo dr Liebi dr Harmonie und dr Schönheit
Em Einzige wo isch
Vereint mit au de erluchtete Seele,
wo dr Meister, dr Geist vo der Führig verkörpere

Dutch

Tot de Ene,
de volmaaktheid van liefde, harmonie en schoonheid
Het enige Wezen, verenigd met alle verlichte zielen
Die de belichaming vormen van de Meester, de Geest van leiding

Frisian

(Friesland is a Northern province of the Netherlands with its own officially recognized own language. It is not a dialect of Dutch)

Nei de iene,
it volbrochte through leafde, harmony en skjinnens.
It einigste wezen, verienigd mei alle verlochte sielen,
die it liif binnen fan de master, de geast van lieding.

Swedish

Hän emot den Ende,
fullkomligheten av kärlek, harmoni och skönhet
Den Allena Varande,
förenad med alla de upplysta själar
som förkroppsligar Mästaren,
den Vägledande Anden.

Danish

Henimod den Ene,
Fuldendt kærlighed, harmoni og skønhed.
Den eneste Væren,
forenet med alle de oplyste sjæle,
som legemliggør Mesteren,
Ånden, der vejleder.

Norwegian

Henimot den Ene;
Den fullkomne kjærlighet, harmoni og skjønnhet.
Den eneste Væren - forent med alle de opplyste sjelene
som danner legemliggjørelsen av Mesteren –
Ånden som veileder

Finnish

Kohti Ainoaa,
rakkauden, harmonian ja kauneuden täydellistymää,
Ainoaa Olentoa, yhdistyen kaikkien valaistuneiden sielujen kanssa,
jotka muodostavat mestarin ruumiillistuman,
Hengen johdatuksen.

Estonian

Ühtsuse Poole,
Armastuse, harmoonia ja ilu täiuslikkuse poole
Ainsa Olendi Poole, Ühendatud
kõigi valgustatud Hingedega
Kes loovad Meistri kehastuse, Juhtija Vaimu

Latvian

Vienīgajam!
Mīlestības, Harmonijas un Skaistuma pilnībai.
Vienīgajai būtnei kas apvieno visas
apgaismotas dvēseles
un veido diža Skolotāja
vadošo garu.

Lithuanian

Į Vieną Meilės,
harmonijos ir grožio tobulybę
Vienintelę Esybę
Vieningą su visomis apšviestomis sielomis,
Kurios įkūnyja meistrą -
Vedančiąją Dvasią.

French

Vers l'Unique,
la Perfection d'Amour, d'Harmonie et de Beauté,
le Seul Être uni à toutes les âmes illuminées
qui forment l'Incorporation du Maître, l'Esprit-Guide

Spanish (Europe)

Hacia el Uno,
La Perfección del Amor, Armonía y Belleza
El único Ser, Unidos a todas las almas iluminadas
que forman la encarnación del Maestro, El Espíritu Guía

Spanish (South America)

Hacia el Uno,
la Perfección del Amor, la Armonía y la Belleza
el ser único, unido a todas las almas iluminadas
que forman el cuerpo del Maestro, el Espíritu Guía

Catalan

*(Catalonia is a large Province of Spain around Barcelona
with its own culture, language and customs)*

Envers l'Ú,
la perfecció de l'Amor, Harmonia i Bellesa
l'Únic Ser, Units a totes les ànimes illuminades
que formen l'encarnació del Mestre, l'Esperit Guia

Portuguese (Europe)

Em direcção ao Uno,
à perfeição do Amor, Harmonia e Beleza,
o ser único, unidos com todas as almas iluminadas,
que formam a incorporação do Mestre,
o Espírito de guia

Portuguese (Brazil)

Em direção ao Um,
a perfeição de amor, harmonia e beleza,
o Ser Único, Unidos com todas as almas iluminadas
que formam a incorporação do Mestre,
o Espírito de Guiança.

Italian

Verso l'Unico,
la Perfezione d'Amore, d'Armonia e di Bellezza,
il Solo Essere; Uniti con Tutte le Anime Illuminate,
Che formano la Personificazione del Maestro,
lo Spirito Guida.

Greek

Προς το Ενα,
την τελειότητα της Αγάπης, της Αρμονίας
και τής Όμορφιάς
Το μοναδικό Όν, Ενωμένοι με όλες τις φωτισμένες ψυχές
Πού αποτελούν τήν ενσάρκωση τού Ενός,
του καθοδηγητικού Πνεύματος.

Pros to Ena,
tèn teleiotèta tes agapes, tes armonias kai tes homorphias
To monadiko on,
enomenoi me holes tis photismenes psyches
Pou apoteloun ten ensarkosè tou Enos,
tou kathodègètikou pneumatatos

Polish

Wzywamy Jedynego,
Doskonałą miłość harmonię i piękno,
Jedyną istotę
zjednoczoną ze wszystkimi oświeconymi duszami,
Które tworzą ucieleśnienie mistrza
ducha przewodnictwa,

Russian (singular)

К Единому,
Совершенству Любви, Гармонии и Красоты, Единосущему,
Единому со всеми просветленными душами,
Которые образуют воплощение Мастера,
Путеводный Дух.

К Edenamu,
Savershenstvu Lubvy(i) Garmonee i Krasoti
K Jedenasuschemu jedenamu
sa vseme prasvetlennime dushami,
Katorie abrazujut vaploschenie Mastera
Putevodniy Duch

Russian (plural)

К Единому,
К Совершенству Любви, Гармонии и Красоты.
К Единосущему,
Объединяясь со всеми просветленными душами,
Которые образуют воплощение Мастера,
Путеводный Дух

К Edenamu,
K Savershenstvu Lubvy(i) Garmonee i Krasoti
K Jedenosuschemu abjedinajas
sa vsemi prasketlennime dushami,
Katorie abrazujut vaploschenie Mastera
Putevodniy Duch

Czech

K jedinému,
dokonalosti lásky, harmonie a krásy,
Jedinému bytí, spojenému se všemi
osvícenými bytostmi,
Které tvoří vtělení Mistra, Ducha, jenž vede

Bosnian

U susret Onom,
savršenstvu ljubavi, harmonije i ljepote
Jedinom Biću sjedinjenim, sa svim prosvjetljenim dušama
koje utjelovljuje Gospodara duha vodiča

Gaelic (Ireland)

Faoi dhein
an lochta is airde, foirfeacht an gra,
an chomhtheachta agus na hailleachta
An te spioradalta ata nasctha,
le tinfeadh na n-anamachta
A dheilbhionn iomha na maistreacta spiorad na comhairle

Gaelic (Scotland)

A dh' ionsaigh
an Aon Iomlanachd a' ghraidh,
's na reidhbheart, 's na masie An aon Bhith,
Aonacite, Le gach anam soilleirichte a tha 'cumadh creubh a' Mhaighistir
Spiorad an treorachaidh

Welsh

Tuag at yr Un,
Perffeithydd, Cariad, Cytgord a Prydferthwch
Yr Unig Fod, Yn unediga'r eneidiau goleudig,
Sy'n ffurfio ymgorfforiad o'r Meistr,
Ysbryd Arweiniad

Hebrew³

לאחד
שהנו שלמות אהבה, תפארת ויופי
ליחיד, המאחד בתוכו את כל הנשמות המוארות

Le Ehad,
Sheino shlemut ahava, teferet ve yoffi,
Le Yahid, a'meached betoho et kol'ha neshamot a'muarot,
A'meyatzrot et itgalmut a'Uman,
a'Ruah a'Movila.

Arabic

Below is an Arabic version from Tunisia, made in classical Arabic. Another version we heard, made by a Lebanese mureed of Inayat Khan, starts with *bismillah*. Unfortunately, we were not able to obtain a written version of this Lebanese version.

Touje'ha al waa'hedi
Mon'taha-alhobbi, w-alwiemi, w-aljameli
Al-ke'-ino alwahee'du
Mujtem'ian bi kulu arwehi-elmunirati
Almojustida alkhaa'liqi
Rouh alhouda

تُجاه الواحد, منتهى الحب
والوئام والجمال، الكائن
الوحيد، مجتمع بكل الأرواح
المنيرة المجسدة للخالق،
روح الهدى.

³ Another Hebrew version by the late Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi (1924–2014) can be found in: Rabbi Pamela Frydman: *Calling on God*. Wild Earth Press, 2012., p. 165 – 167. As this translation needs the explanation given in the book (similar to the differences between Allah, Ahad and Wahid), we omitted it here. The retranslation back into English shines light on this Hebrew version: *Toward the One, Unique, One, and Unified, the Wholeness of Truth, Righeousness and Beauty, The Only One in Existence, who contains all the illuminated Souls, forming the actualization of the Master, the Spirit of Holiness.*

Maori

E mihi ana ki te kotahitanga tapu.

Ko ia hoki te tino taumata o te aroha,

O te whakaaro tahi me te ataahua.

Kaore he tangata ko atu i a ia.

I whakakotahitia ki nga wairua turama katoa.

Ko ratou nei te whakatinanatanga o ratou kua whetu rangitia

O te ngakau arataki